Bloch, H., Poulsen, M. K., Rahbek, C. & Rasmussen, J. F. 1991. *A survey of the montane forest avifauna of the Loja Province, Southern Ecuador.* ICBP study report No. 49, ICBP, Cambridge.

King, J. R. 1991. Body weights of some Ecuadorean birds. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 111: 46–49.

Meyer de Schauensee, R. 1970. *A Guide to the Birds of South America.* Livingstone Publishing Co.

Traylor, M. A., Jr. 1985. Species limits in the *Ochthoeca diadema* species-group (Tyrannidae). Pp. 430–442 *in* P. A. Buckley, M. S. Foster, E. S. Morton, R. S. Ridgely & F. G. Buckley (eds), *Neotropical Ornithology.* Orn. Monogr. no. 36.

Address: Zoological Museum, University of Copenhagen, Universitetsparken 15, DK-2100 Copenhagen Ø, Denmark.

Distributional records, natural history notes, and conservation of some poorly known birds from southwestern Ecuador and northwestern Peru

By Brinley J. Best, Christopher T. Clarke, Matthew Checker, Amanda L. Broom, Richard M. Thewlis, Will Duckworth & Angus McNab

Received 30 April 1992

The Andean foothills and adjacent coastal plain of southwestern Ecuador and northwestern Peru form an ecological transition zone between the very humid Colombian and Ecuadorean Pacific rainforests to the north, and the xeric coastal area of Peru to the south. This topographically complex area supports a very broad spectrum of habitats, ranging from dry, desert-like scrub to very humid cloud forests. This range of vegetation types is influenced by a strongly seasonal climate: the period from May to November is usually very dry, but a pronounced wet season occurs from December to April in most years (Brown 1941, Munday & Munday 1992).

Early bird collectors achieved relatively complete geographic coverage and a thorough synthesis of the avifauna was possible by the late 1920s (Chapman 1926). Chapman named the characteristic bird species of the region the *Equatorial Arid Fauna.* In contrast to early ornithological effort, there were very few surveys between 1930 and 1970 (e.g. Marchant 1958, Koepcke 1961, D. Norton and R. A. Paynter in 1964–1965); only in the late 1970s and 1980s did zoologists begin to reinvestigate the area (Schulenberg & Parker 1981, Parker *et al.* 1985, Wiedenfeld *et al.* 1985, Parker *et al.* 1989, Robbins & Ridgely 1990). Up to 1990 the region was still poorly represented in the ornithological literature, and one of its endemic species (the El Oro Parakeet *Pyrrhura orcesi*) was only formally described in 1988 (Ridgely & Robbins 1988). In the last five years, however, survey work has intensified and several survey reports have

appeared (Best & Clarke 1991, Bloch *et al.* 1991, Krabbe 1991, Williams & Tobias 1991, Best 1992, Parker & Carr 1992; also unpublished species lists from ANSP and WFVZ surveys). Despite this recent interest in the region, journal papers concerning its avifauna still remain very sparse.

Müller (1973) and Cracraft (1985) discussed the complex biogeographical situation of western Ecuador and adjacent northwestern Peru. Cracraft (1985) noted that several species are restricted to the region, and he named the area to which they are confined the Tumbesian endemic centre after the Department of Tumbes in Peru which forms its spatial centre. The most recent analysis of the endemic avifauna of the Tumbesian region (ICBP 1992) lists 44 endemic species entirely confined to it, the second highest of all 221 Endemic Bird Areas (EBAs) identified by ICBP worldwide. The Tumbesian region overlaps with a number of other EBAs: its eastern fringe borders the South Ecuador/North Peru Cloud Forests EBA (Best & Clarke 1991); whereas to the northeast there is overlap with species from the Chocó/Pacific slope Andes EBA, with some species characteristic of that region also occurring at more humid sites within the Tumbesian area (see discussion).

Recent investigations revealed that the forests of the Tumbesian region have been degraded to a patchwork of agricultural land punctuated by occasional forest remnants. The endemic forest avifauna has thus become isolated in small, scattered fragments which are themselves under threat. At least 15 globally threatened bird species are confined to these forest fragments (Collar *et al.* 1992). When plans for fieldwork were being formulated in 1988 the majority of ornithological data from the region came from prior to 1930. Satellite images from 1986 illustrated that extensive deforestation had ravaged the area since that time. However, of the forest fragments that had survived up to 1988, several had never been surveyed. We were eager to document the avifauna of these areas before they also disappeared. Furthermore, the habitat requirements of the threatened species were poorly known. The only data on the birds' breeding seasons came from the Santa Elena Peninsula in western Ecuador, where breeding coincided with the annual rains (Marchant 1958); the timing of the breeding season in extreme southwestern Ecuador had yet to be established. A combination of these factors encouraged us to mount two expeditions: the first in August and September 1989 (the dry season); the second from January to March 1991 (the wet season). The purpose of this paper is to present our most noteworthy ornithological data from both surveys. Further details of the surveys can be found in Best & Clarke (1991) and Best (1992).

From 8 August to 30 September 1989 B. J. Best, C. T. Clarke, M. Checker, A. McNab, M. Chango and R. Tapia surveyed three sites in Loja Province, Ecuador, for which no previous ornithological data existed (apart from a two-day survey of one site in June 1989 (Bloch *et al.* 1991)) (Fig. 1); C.T.C. and M.C. also visited one site in Piura Department, northern Peru. From 6 January to 13 March 1991 B.J.B., A. L. Broom, M.C., R. M. Thewlis, J. W. Duckworth and J. Cueva surveyed an additional 11 Ecuadorean sites, 7 in Loja Province, 2 in El Oro and 2 in Azuay (five of which were ornithologically unknown), and resurveyed the earlier three in Loja. Details of the sites surveyed appear in Appendix A; their geographical positions are shown in Figure 1.

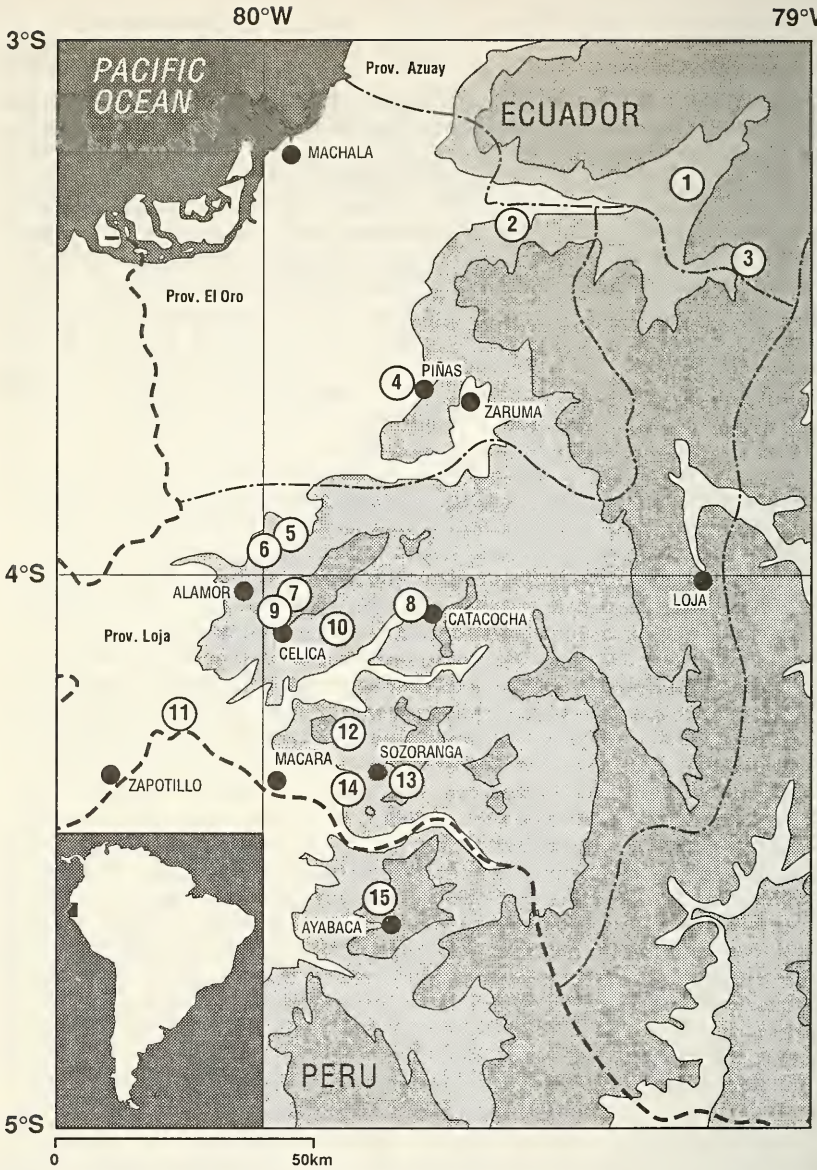

Figure 1. Sites surveyed by the authors in SW Ecuador (and *NW Peru) in 1989 and 1991:

1. Río Rircay Valley†, 3°17′S, 79°15′W.
2. Uzhcurrumi†, 3°21′S, 79°33′W.
3. Oña, 3°25′S, 79°07′W.
4. Buenaventura, 3°40′S, 79°44′W.
5. Vicentino†, 3°57′S, 79°57′S.
6. Alamor, 4°00′S, 80°00′S.
7. Tierra Colorada†, 4°02′S, 79°57′W.
8. Catacocha†, 4°03′S, 79°40′W.
9. Celica, 4°07′S, 79°58′W.
10. El Empalme, 4°07′S, 79°51′W.
11. El Ceibo-Sabanilla†, 4°15′S, 80°08′W.
12. Sozoranga, 4°21′S, 79°47′W.
13. Utuana†, 4°22′S, 79°43′W.
14. Tambo Negro†, 04°24′S, 79°51′W.
15. *Ayabaca†, 04°36′S, 79°44′W.

†sites which were ornithologically unknown prior to our surveys.
Dark stippling denotes land above 2000 m, light stippling land over 1000 m.

A list of all bird species recorded, with relative abundance and breeding data, appears as Appendix B. In the main part of this paper we report noteworthy distributional records of 31 species, with natural history notes and comments on the conservation of the 19 most poorly known. One species, Black-crested Tit-Tyrant *Anairetes nigrocristatus*, and one subspecies, Black-eared Hemispingus *Hemispingus melanotis piurae*, are reported from Ecuador for the first time. Additional information is included from M. Kessler, N. Krabbe and F. Lambert who spent time in the field with the authors during the 1991 survey. This includes sonagrams produced from tape-recordings made by F. Lambert.

Unless specifically indicated to the contrary, the species was searched for, but not recorded, above or below the altitudinal limits given (survey sites covered the range 320–2625 m). Abundance estimates used in the species accounts should be interpreted as in Appendix B. The letter T on the title line denotes species from the Tumbesian EBA; the letter A members of the South Ecuador/North Peru Cloud Forests EBA; and the letter C Chocó/Andean Pacific slope endemics (following the lists of Crosby *et al.* in prep.). If applicable, the Red Data Book (Collar *et al.* 1992) categories of rare, vulnerable, endangered or indeterminate (for threatened species), or 'near-threatened', are indicated.

Tape-recordings mentioned in the text are deposited at the British Library of Wildlife Sounds, London. Acronyms used in the species accounts include: ANSP = Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia; BMNH = British Museum of Natural History, Tring; FMNH = Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago; LSUMZ = Louisiana State University Museum of Zoology; MCZ = Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard; MECN = Museo Ecuatoriano de Ciencias Naturales, Quito; and WFVZ = Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, Los Angeles. Bird nomenclature and sequence follow Ridgely & Greenfield (in prep.); habitat classifications follow those of Kessler (in press).

PALE-BROWED TINAMOU *Crypturellus transfasciatus* T, near-threatened

Common at Tambo Negro, Loja Province, Ecuador, from August to September 1989 and January to March 1991 throughout the altitudinal range of that site (600–1000 m). At least 10 were found daily (during four or more hours survey-time) on the floor of *Ceiba trichistandra*-dominated Deciduous Forest, but were wary and often hurriedly ran into dense understorey after detecting our presence. On 20 February 1991, several were heard calling from more open *Ceiba* forest around the military checkpoint, about 15 km E of Arenillas, El Oro Province, Ecuador (3°40′S, 80°07′W). At Tambo Negro they called repeatedly with a loud, resonant *whooit* (tape-recorded) in the early morning and from 17.30 hrs until dark. The species is given near-threatened status in Collar *et al.* (1992); our observations indicate that in open, disturbed deciduous forest (where an understorey still persists), this species can be readily found and is not in immediate danger. This is in agreement with other recent observations (R. Ridgely).

FASCIATED TIGER-HERON *Tigrisoma fasciatum* near-threatened

One was seen perched on a log across a fast-flowing river at Tierra Colorada, Loja Province, Ecuador, on 11 February 1991. This appears to

be a southward range extension in western Ecuador from Cañar Province about 200 km to the north. The species is scarce throughout its range (R. Ridgely).

GREY-BACKED HAWK *Leucopternis occidentalis* T, endangered

Seen at six sites in 1991 in El Oro and Loja Provinces, Ecuador, from the lowest study-site (320 m) to 1800 m. Sites (all with at least 2–3 birds) were: Uzhcurrumi, Buenaventura, Alamor, Vicentino, Tierra Colorada and Celica. This species was found in evergreen forest and over adjacent agricultural land. Several putative pairs were seen; on 10 February two birds took part in a spectacular aerial display at Tierra Colorada, involving one bird rising to several hundred metres, then diving vertically down towards the other, uttering a drawn-out, screeching *keeeearr*. At Vicentino on 8 February, one of two birds flying together carried sticks in its feet which it deposited in an isolated tree in a field (but no nest could be seen). Most observations involved lone individuals or presumed pairs sitting at mid- to upper-storey level (often calling to each other), inside or on the edge of forest, or in isolated trees in agricultural areas.

Although *L. occidentalis* is clearly vulnerable to deforestation, our observations suggest that areas maintaining small patches of remnant humid forest can still support small numbers of this species, at least in the short term. However, as for the majority of bird species endemic to the Tumbesian region, its precise breeding requirements need to be determined.

SOLITARY EAGLE *Harpyhaliaetus solitarius* near-threatened

One soaring at 1800 m over Quebrada Suquinda (4 km NW of Sozoranga town), Loja Province, on 22 September 1989, was mobbed by two Harris's Hawks *Parabuteo unicinctus*. There are scattered records of *H. solitarius* from a few sites in the Ecuadorean Andes and foothills (e.g. Buenaventura, Robbins & Ridgely 1990). This species is rare throughout its range from Central America to Argentina (Fjeldså & Krabbe 1990) and is thought to be threatened by montane forest destruction (Collar & Andrew 1988); it has recently been given near-threatened status in Collar *et al.* (1992). R. Ridgely informs us that the species may have huge territories and hence be naturally rare throughout its range.

RUFOUS-HEADED CHACHALACA *Ortalis erythroptera* T, near-threatened

Found at 7 sites in western Loja and in El Oro Province, Ecuador, in small patches of remnant forest in the altitudinal range 900–1850 m. At Quebrada Namballe, 6 km NW of Sozoranga town, this species occurred at 1850 m, higher than the previously known altitudinal limit of 1390 m (Chapman 1926), while Tambo Negro is the most southerly known site. Approximately 30 small groups (2–5 birds in each) were encountered during the 1991 survey, and at Sozoranga roughly twice as many groups were found from January to March 1991 as in August and September 1989. *O. erythroptera* occurred in deciduous forest, but was most common in semi-evergreen and evergreen forest patches, and occasionally also in adjacent agricultural land where they were seen in a banana plantation and on the ground in a maize-field.

They were regularly heard vocalizing in the early morning, when groups of up to seven individuals conducted extended bouts of counter-calling from tall trees (also heard later in the day). At Tierra Colorada groups called for extended periods during the day every 2–3 days; on intervening days only sporadic birds called, which did not stimulate others to call. The maximum density of calling groups was recorded on 11 March 1991: 6 groups in a 1–2 km^2 area around Quebrada Yaguana at Sozoranga. We agree with Parker *et al.* (1989) that the raucous, repeated *kwak-ar-ar-ar* call is noticeably slower and lower-pitched than in other members of the genus *Ortalis*. Presumed pairs at Quebrada Yaguana (Sept. 1989) and Tierra Colorada (Feb. 1991) gave a variety of calls including a soft cooing, a harsh *cow*, and a fast, repeated *kawuck* (tape-recorded).

At Sozoranga, local people claimed to hunt *O. erythroptera*, but we never saw the species being hunted at any site, despite being easily found along well-used roads. Although forest fragmentation is expected to have caused a decline in the numbers of *O. erythroptera*, it is still fairly common in many forest remnants. This has led to the species being deleted from the threatened categories of Collar *et al.* (1992) and placed with the near-threatened species. It should be borne in mind that genetic isolation of groups in forest remnants is a further threat to this, and many other forest-dependent Tumbesian endemics (S. Strahl).

BEARDED GUAN *Penelope barbata* A, vulnerable/rare

A small group was encountered at 2625 m in Humid Montane Cloud Forest at Cerro Chacras above the town of Ayabaca, in Piura Department, Peru. On 23 September 1989 three birds flew into a small tree, where they started feeding. The following day, several were heard calling and wing-drumming at dawn, and a single bird at 15.30 hrs perched in the mid-storey of a large tree. *P. barbata* is confined to the Andes of southern Ecuador and northern Peru and is declining due to temperate zone deforestation and hunting (Bloch *et al.* 1991). It is apparently less wary than *Ortalis erythroptera* (C. Rahbek) and can still be readily found in some areas of extensive cloud forest, such as the Podocarpus National Park in southern Ecuador. The most recent estimate of the Ecuadorean population is *c.* 1500 individuals (Bloch *et al.* 1991).

RUFOUS-NECKED WOOD-RAIL *Aramides axillaris*

One on 11 March 1991 was walking slowly through leaf-litter below secondary, Semi-evergreen Lower Montane Cloud Forest at 1400 m at Cerro Florida 3 km ENE of Sozoranga town, Loja Province, Ecuador. The record extends the known upper altitudinal limit in Ecuador by 800 m. Away from coastal mangroves, there are very few records of *A. axillaris*. In February 1988 M. Kessler found the species breeding in the North-West Peru Biosphere Reserve (Parker *et al.* 1989).

OCHRE-BELLIED DOVE *Leptotila ochraceiventris* T, endangered

This rare, elusive dove was found at five new sites ranging from 650 to 2625 m (the latter being the highest study site); four in Loja Province, Ecuador: Vicentino, Catacocha, Sozoranga and Tambo Negro, the fifth in Piura Department, Peru (Ayabaca). The Ayabaca record at Cerro

Chacras (2625 m) unexpectedly extends the known upper altitudinal limit of this species by 700 m into the temperate zone. Small numbers (1–7 per day) were found in deciduous, semi-evergreen and evergreen forest, on the leafy forest floor or in low bushes and trees, mainly in shady, humid ravines (where they often gathered at streams to drink among larger numbers of White-tipped Doves *L. verreauxi*). On three occasions at Sozoranga, individuals or small groups occurred in low scrub away from forest. In February 1991 a captive bird in Alamor (4°02'S, 80°02'W) shared a tiny cage with a Grey-cheeked Parakeet *Brotogeris pyrrhopterus*, having been trapped on agricultural land near to the town where large numbers of *L. verreauxi* occurred.

This species was heard vocalizing only during our January–March 1991 survey, indicating they were then probably approaching breeding. The presumed territorial call (tape-recorded by N. Krabbe) is a short, guttural *whoouur*, rising then falling. In early February and early March 1991 four were found calling from a small patch of Semi-evergreen Cloud Forest at Panacillo just NE of Sozoranga town. On 16 February one called from an open area of secondary forest at Vicentino. On 9 March, five weeks into the rainy season, three called from *Ceiba trichistandra*-dominated Deciduous Forest at Tambo Negro. None were vocalizing at Tambo Negro in August and September 1989 (but the species was seen), nor in late January and early February 1991 before the onset of the annual rains. In September 1989 birds fed on the marble-sized ripe fruit of a *Trichilia* tree in Quebrada Suquinda at Sozoranga, the first documented food-plant.

L. ochraceiventris has disappeared from several Ecuadorean localities (e.g. Santa Rosa in El Oro Province; along the Río Babahoyo, Guayas Province) which have been deforested, and is clearly threatened by deforestation and understorey degradation. This species seems especially vulnerable to understorey disturbance, a characteristic shared by three other Tumbesian endemics: Blackish-headed Spinetail *Synallaxis tithys*, Henna-hooded Foliage-gleaner *Hylocryptus erythrocephalus* and Grey-headed Antbird *Myrmeciza griseiceps*.

RED-MASKED PARAKEET *Aratinga erythrogenys* T, near-threatened

Widespread, occurring at all but three of the sites surveyed from the lowest site (320 m) to 2500 m; we also often saw it when travelling between the sites. This parrot was found in deciduous, semi-evergreen and evergreen forest, and in adjacent agricultural land with scattered trees and bushes. In August and September 1989 *A. erythrogenys* flew over Tambo Negro in large groups of up to 140 individuals at dusk, probably moving to nocturnal roosts; large groups also flew by Utuana at dusk in that month. From January to March 1991 fewer and smaller groups were seen at Tambo Negro; several obvious pairs included those investigating holes in mature *Ceiba trichistandra* trees. Courtship was observed at Tambo Negro and Tierra Colorada. The largest flocks seen during January–March 1991 were at Tierra Colorada, where the largest flock numbered 82 individuals.

These observations indicate that in southwestern Ecuador, *A. erythrogenys* breeds during the rainy season. The species frequently

flocked with *Brotogeris pyrrhopterus*; mixed groups were often seen feeding in fruiting and flowering trees. In late August 1989, they fed on red *Erythrina* flowers at Tambo Negro which also attracted 13 other bird species and the squirrel *Sciurus stramineus* (Best & Clarke 1991). *A. erythrogenys* was the most common captive parrot in the study area; the species is probably threatened by the international cage-bird trade, as large numbers are annually exported from Peru (M. Kessler, IUCN data) and population declines in a number of areas are thought to be due to intense deforestation (P. Greenfield, R. Ridgely). Although considered potentially threatened by several workers (Best & Clarke 1991, Bloch *et al.* 1991, P. Greenfield, R. Ridgely), *A. erythrogenys* is not listed as officially threatened in (Collar *et al.* 1992); these authors preferring the 'near-threatened' category because it is still common in many Tumbesian localities. However, as it requires stands of trees for breeding colonies, and is evidently a popular cage-bird, it should be carefully monitored.

EL ORO PARAKEET *Pyrrhura orcesi* T, vulnerable/rare

On 15 February 1991 a new population of this recently described (Ridgely & Robbins 1988) parakeet was found by N. Krabbe and M. Kessler when a flock was heard in dense mist at 1300 m between Guanazán and Uzhcurrumi in northern El Oro Province (3°23′S, 79°32′W). This area (situated *c.* 40 km N of the 1980 type-locality at Buenaventura west of Piñas (Ridgely & Robbins 1988) consisted mainly of gardens and orchards, with some tiny patches of wet forest. The record also extends the known upper altitudinal limit of *P. orcesi* by 300 m. We also encountered this species at Buenaventura, in groups of 3–10 individuals within and on the edge of Very Humid Premontane Cloud Forest. In addition to the above two localities, *P. orcesi* is only known from four others: Piedras in El Oro Province (a previously overlooked specimen in the BMNH: Ridgely & Robbins 1988) and three localities on the Pacific slope in Azuay Province to the north (Collar *et al.* 1992), and is thus very vulnerable to deforestation within its tiny range.

GREY-CHEEKED PARAKEET *Brotogeris pyrrhopterus* T, near-threatened

Found at 8 sites in Loja and El Oro Provinces, Ecuador, from 320 m (the lowest study site) to 1400 m. In addition to those sites listed in Appendix B, groups were also found at numerous places whilst travelling between the study sites. *B. pyrrhopterus* occurred in deciduous and semi-deciduous forest, and also in adjacent agricultural areas, but seemed to prefer drier habitats. At Tambo Negro, they formed groups of up to 40 in August and September 1989; smaller groups predominated there from January to March 1991, with many pairs. These investigated holes in mature *Ceiba trichistandra* trees, copulated and allopreened. A pair was also seen copulating there in August 1989. Groups fed on *Erythrina* flowers at this site in August and September 1989, and on *Ceiba* seeds in January.

Several captives were seen in the study area; like *A. erythrogenys*, the present species is probably threatened by the international cage-bird trade and by habitat destruction. No fewer than 97,947 were reported in trade from 1982–1990, and large shipments of this species into the USA and Europe apparently continue (IUCN data). Despite marked

population declines in some areas (e.g. along the Río Babahoyo; Best & Clarke 1991), *B. pyrrhopterus* is not listed in one of the threatened categories of Collar *et al.* (1992) because it is still fairly common in degraded agricultural habitats. However, because the species nests in tree-holes (Parker *et al.* 1989) it is still vulnerable, and has been given near-threatened status in Collar *et al.* (1992).

PERUVIAN SCREECH-OWL *Otus roboratus* T

Several heard in February–March 1991 in Loja Province, Ecuador, in *Ceiba*-dominated Forest at Tambo Negro, and also two singles near Sozoranga (Panacillo and Quebrada Yaguana), both in Semi-evergreen Lower Montane Cloud Forest. Two different vocalizations were heard: a barked *ow* and a short trill; these match the calls of this species recorded by other workers. On range, these records probably refer to the subspecies *O. r. pacificus* which is known from several localities in northwestern Peru (Johnson & Jones 1990). *O. roboratus* has only recently been confirmed as occurring in Ecuador, and a series of new records extends its known northerly limit to Jauneche in Los Ríos Province at 1°10′S, 79°30′W (P. Coopmans, Parker & Carr 1992).

STYGIAN OWL *Asio stygius*

On the evenings of 10, 11 and 12 March 1991, one was watched by spotlamp, perched on a television aerial in Sozoranga town centre (Loja Province, Ecuador). It called each night with a deep, repeated *hwooo* for variable periods around 22.00 hrs. Residents described the species as 'common' and a nuisance, because the presence of birds on television aerials interferes with reception. Furthermore, sometimes this species and Barn Owl *Tyto alba* are captured, doused with petrol then set alight and released. *A. stygius* is rare or very local throughout its range from Central America to Argentina (Fjeldså & Krabbe 1990).

RAINBOW STARFRONTLET *Coeligena iris* A

Recorded at four sites in Loja Province, Ecuador, in Semi-evergreen Lower Montane and Montane Cloud Forest and in nearby humid shrubbery from 1700 m (unusually low for the species) to 2625 m (the highest study site; *C. iris* occurs higher in nearby mountains (Bloch *et al.* 1991)). At Utuana in September 1989 *C. iris* was fairly common, and in February 1991 this species and Purple-throated Sunangel *Heliangelus viola* took part in both inter- and intra-specific territorial disputes. *C. iris* is restricted to montane southern Ecuador and northern Peru (Fjeldså & Krabbe 1990), and although given near-threatened status in Collar & Andrew (1988), the species is no longer considered at risk because it occurs so commonly in degraded secondary habitats.

GORGETED SUNANGEL *Heliangelus strophianus* C, near-threatened

Small numbers were seen at Buenaventura, El Oro Province, Ecuador, in February and March 1991, frequenting the mid- and understorey of Very Humid Premontane Cloud Forest. This species is a virtual Ecuador endemic and these records constitute a southward range extension from Azuay Province, approximately 100 km to the north (Ridgely & Greenfield in prep.).

PURPLE-THROATED SUNANGEL *Heliangelus viola* A

Fairly common at two sites in Loja Province, Ecuador: Utuana and Celica, and also found at Ayabaca in Piura Department, Peru, in Humid Montane Cloud Forest and humid shrubbery from 2000 to 2625 m (the highest study site; like *C. iris* it occurs at higher elevations nearby (Bloch *et al.* 1991)). It possesses a distribution similar to *Coeligena iris* and was similarly given near-threatened status in Collar & Andrew (1988), being formally considered a true forest hummingbird. However, like that species, it occurs regularly in degraded areas and is not in any danger (R. Ridgely). This is confirmed by Collar *et al.* (1992) who do not list the species as near-threatened.

BLACKISH-HEADED SPINETAIL *Synallaxis tithys* T, endangered

Recorded only in forest at Tambo Negro where it occurred throughout the altitudinal range of the locality (600–1000 m), extending the known upper altitudinal limit of the species by 250 m. Tambo Negro is also the most southerly point of the species' known range, and the most inland site. A MCZ specimen was collected within 2 km of Tambo Negro in October 1965 by D. Norton (R. Ridgely). Small groups or presumed pairs foraged in the leaf-litter and the understorey of *Ceiba*-dominated Deciduous Forest; birds were mainly observed 1 m or less from the ground (exceptionally to 5 m, see below). The species seemed most common in denser understorey, frequently hopping through the leaf-litter (one individual was seen to completely immerse itself under leaves), sometimes with Black-capped Sparrows *Arremon abeillei*. In January and February 1991, several were found calling high up (to 5 m) in leafless trees. Their distinctive, churring, wren-like call, a short upward inflected trill, was tape-recorded (Fig. 2).

We believe *S. tithys* is gravely at risk from deforestation and understorey disturbance; in the last decade it has been found at only seven sites, all but one in Ecuador (see Collar *et al.* 1992), being confined to forest in all except one. Even at that locality (Alamor) the species may only occur seasonally (Williams & Tobias in prep.).

RUFOUS-NECKED FOLIAGE-GLEANER
Syndactyla (Automolus) ruficollis T, endangered

Occurred at six sites in Loja Province, Ecuador, and at Ayabaca in Piura Department, Peru, from 600 to 2625 m (the highest study site). The species was uncommon from 600 to 1000 m in *Ceiba*-dominated Deciduous Forest (there are very few recent records below 1000 m; Ridgely & Greenfield in prep.), being commoner above 1500 m in the mid- and understorey of Semi-evergreen Lower Montane and Montane Cloud Forest, sometimes in bamboo. The bird occurred in single-species and mixed-species flocks including one unusually large group of at least 10 *S. ruficollis* foraging in a loose flock through cloud forest trees on 22 September 1989 at Utuana. *S. ruficollis* frequently probed the bases of arboreal bromeliads, presumably in search of arthropods.

On 3 February 1991, one at Tambo Negro foraged in the leaf-litter, behaviour more typical of Henna-hooded Foliage-gleaner *Hylocryptus erythrocephalus*. Vocalizations included a staccato *chek*; the territorial song was a drawn-out *chik, chik, che-che, tirrrrrr*, the last note drawn-out

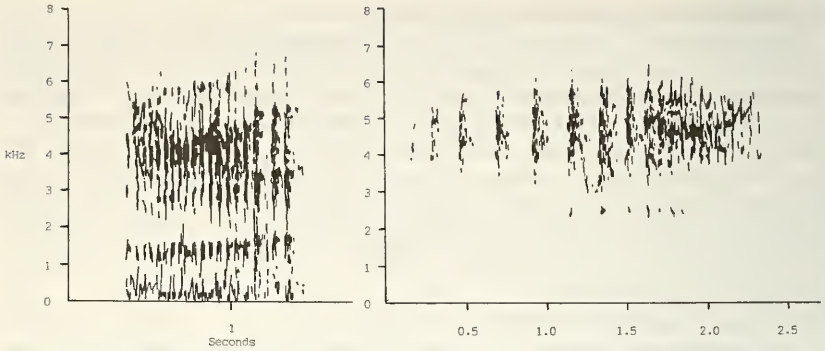

Figure 2. Calls of *Synallaxis tithys* (left) and *Syndactyla ruficollis* (right), from recordings made by Dr F. Lambert.

and downward inflected (Fig. 2). On the basis of its vocalizations and arboreal habits this species is now usually treated as a *Syndactyla* rather than an *Automolus* (Fjeldså & Krabbe 1990, Parker *et al.* 1989); our recordings of its voice and observations of its behaviour support this taxonomic revision. This information on *S. ruficollis* supplements that of Parker *et al.* (1985) from Cruz Blanca in Piura Department, Peru. *S. ruficollis* is threatened by deforestation and especially the trampling of undergrowth by cattle and clearance of bamboo for pack animal fodder (Best & Clarke 1991, Parker *et al.* 1985). Its distribution is more montane than most of the Tumbesian endemics and it occurs in the same threatened forest types as the Grey-headed Antbird *Myrmeciza griseiceps*.

HENNA-HOODED FOLIAGE-GLEANER

Hylocryptus erythrocephalus T, indeterminate

This distinctive furnariid occurred at four sites in Loja Province, Ecuador, from 600–1800 m. The 1800 m sightings at Sozoranga make that site the highest so far discovered for the species, which was previously known only to 1390 m near Alamor (Chapman 1926). At Tambo Negro it was fairly common and easily located during January–March 1991, although it had not been found in August–September 1989, suggesting that it may undertake local seasonal movements. It occurred singly, in presumed pairs or in mixed-species flocks under *Ceiba*-dominated Deciduous Forest and Semi-evergreen Lower Montane Cloud Forest, and appeared to favour areas with a dense understorey and a thick covering of leaf-litter, often under less disturbed forest. Individuals spent much of the time on or within 1 m of the forest-floor, habitually rummaging noisily in the leaf-litter, tossing leaves and twigs into the air (making them conspicuous when feeding). These observations complement those of Wiedenfeld *et al.* (1985) and Parker *et al.* (1989) from Tumbes Department, Peru.

The staccato, chattering call (see Paynter 1972 for sonagram) was not heard at Sozoranga or Tambo Negro on our August to September 1989 survey, but was repeatedly heard there during January to March 1991

(when it was tape-recorded). But in June 1989 the bird was heard calling in Quebrada Yaguana at Sozoranga (Bloch *et al.* 1991). Birds occasionally perched up to 3 m in low bushes and trees and called repeatedly.

On 27 January 1991 a dispute involved three individuals chasing and violently attacking each other up to 2 m off the ground, making short flights from branch to branch and calling very loudly. *H. erythrocephalus* is a hole-nester (the first occupied nest-hole was found by M. Kessler in February 1986 at El Caucho in the North-West Peru Biosphere Reserve in Tumbes Department; Parker *et al.* 1989) and at least four probable nest-holes were found, surrounded by low scrub, in the crumbling road-side earth-cliffs near Sozoranga. The bird is threatened by deforestation and understorey clearance in the tropical and subtropical zones, and except for an outlying population in Manabí Province, Ecuador (Parker & Carr 1992, R. Ridgely), it is confined to a small area of Ecuador's El Oro and Loja Provinces and adjacent northwestern Peru.

(*to be continued*)

The name of the Ecuadorean subspecies of the Chestnut-collared Swallow *Hirundo rufocollaris*

by Kenneth C. Parkes

Received 19 May 1992

In much of the literature, the Cave Swallow *Hirundo fulva* of the southern U.S., Mexico, and the West Indies, is credited with having two isolated subspecies on the west coast of South America, in Peru and Ecuador. Ridgely & Tudor (1989) considered these populations to represent a separate species, the Chestnut-collared Swallow *H. rufocollaris*, and this treatment is followed here. The type locality of *Hirundo rufocollaris* Peale, 1848, is in Peru. Chapman (1924) named the Ecuadorean population *Petrochelidon rufocollaris aequatorialis*.

Earlier, Lawrence (1867) had described a new species as "*Hirundo aequitorialis*". This name has always been considered to be a synonym of *Tachycineta albiventer* Boddaert, 1783, the White-winged Swallow. Hellmayr (1935: 71, footnote) stated that "*aequitorialis*" of Lawrence was a misprint for "*aequatorialis*". Brooke (1974) accepted Hellmayr's dictum, and pointed out that once *Petrochelidon* was merged with *Hirundo*, as now accepted by the majority of authors, *P. rufocollaris aequatorialis* Chapman, 1924, would be preoccupied by *H. "aequatorialis"* Lawrence, 1867. Brooke therefore renamed the Ecuador subspecies of Chestnut-collared Swallow as *Hirundo (Petrochelidon) fulva chapmani*, nom. nov.

The difficulty with all of this is that Hellmayr's statement was contrary to the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature. The name *aequitorialis* appears only once in Lawrence's paper (which Brooke had not seen), so that there is no internal evidence that this was in fact a